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Making a Hard Life Easier

BY JAMES GORDON GILKEY

PROBABLY many of you have read the unusual volume, *America in Midpassage*. It traces the course of American history from 1924 to 1938, and also paints vivid portraits of our national leaders during that period. Consider this picture of President Hoover:

"Mr. Hoover entered high official life by the front rather than the back door. The post of Secretary of Commerce was given him, not as a political reward, but in recognition of his outstanding personal achievements. Thus the familiar features of political life—the constant squabbles over spoils, the personal mischiefs, the hateful disagreements and the intense love-feasts—were unfamiliar and alien to him. With growling, huckstering and backslapping Congressmen he was never at ease. His tenacity of purpose was little tempered by flexibility, and to strong dissent of any type he was acutely sensitive. When his opponents portrayed him in the lineaments of greed, cunning and futility he was both astonished and grieved. Entangled in these personal limitations he could not, like Lincoln, tell stories and laugh when the members of his own party harassed him, and the members of the opposing party hawked at him. His trials and vexations were probably not more onerous than those of other Presidents, but his ability to treat them lightly was smaller than that of his predecessors."

Those keen words make plain one of the important differences between different individuals. Some people, meeting a hard life, prove unable to take its burdens and annoyances lightly. Life for them is, as it was for President Hoover, "hard going." Meantime other individuals, forced to face an equally hard life, show an astonishing ability to handle their difficulties easily. They seem to ride exultantly on top of their load,

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rather than stagger wearily beneath it. Lincoln is of course the classic example of this second type, but multitudes of lesser men represent it equally well.

Consider these words, quoted from the biography of a little known essayist of our own days—William Crary Brownell. His wife, who was also his biographer, says: "Through knowing him I became acquainted with a certain masculine largeness. It is the quality of spirit which does not insist on following small game to its final lair, which quietly drops unprofitable discussions, which lets minor matters take care of themselves, which when irritated by an abuse does not propose writing to the newspapers, and which drops to sleep quietly in the midst of situations that would keep a woman awake half the night." The ability to manage a hard life easily—there you see it clearly.

Now suppose your life is hard, indubitably hard. Suppose it promises to remain hard. Suppose, as you look ahead, you see an apparently endless procession of burdens and anxieties, problems and vexations marching toward you. How can you gain the power to treat those difficulties lightly? How can you make your hard life easier?

The advice usually given in this situation is familiar to us all. One friend says: "Don't try to carry all the burdens yourself. Divide them with other people." Another says: "Cultivate serenity of spirit. Be calm and composed no matter what happens." Still another says: "Stop taking life so seriously. When you meet irritating situations and irritating people, laugh. Laugh at yourself, laugh at those other people, laugh at the problems life is creating for you all."

Were you beaten in the fight?
Laugh it off.
Are you cheated of your right?
Laugh it off.
Don't make tragedies of trifles,
Don't hunt gnats with high-powered rifles,
Laugh it off.

Does your work get into kinks?
Laugh it off.
Are you near all sorts of brinks?
Laugh it off.
If it's victory you're after
There's no strategy like laughter,
Laugh it off.

But the limitations of such advice are soon apparent. The ability to laugh it off, the ability to retain one's composure, the ability to delegate responsibility—these are abilities which belong to a certain type of personality, only to that type of personality. Unless an individual possesses this type of personality he finds it almost if not quite impossible to display these powers. Being the man he was, President Hoover could not laugh it off when he found stinging cartoons of himself published in Democratic newspapers. Only if he changed himself, only if he acquired a new pattern of personality, could he display the ability which he needed, and which some of his predecessors—notably Abraham Lincoln—had possessed. Now how can you and I build within ourselves the type of personality which handles a hard life easily? How can we master difficulty and vexation?

This morning I should like to make four suggestions. As I make them I hope you will realize I am making them to myself as well as to you. I too face the problem of making a crowded and sometimes annoying life easier.

I

To begin with: let us never permit ourselves to become imprisoned within the petty details of our work. From time to time we must deliberately break free from those details. If we fail to do so they will gradually establish control over us, and then life will become unendurably difficult for us. Listen to this poem by Agnes Lee. It describes a woman who has become hopelessly imprisoned within the routine of her housework:

In her home, a woman I know
Is a bark-bound tree.
The flowers bloom at her feet
But she does not see.

The knife has glittered by
In the forest to prune,
It has left her deaf to the wind
And blind to the moon.

She will live on her sap
In the toil and the dark,
Till she shrivels and dies
In her walls of bark . . .

Unless that glittering knife
Should return her way,
Set its steel to her bark
And let in day.

Are housewives the only people who thus become "bark-bound"? Certainly not. Many men, particularly men who are super-busy, suffer the same fate. They gradually become imprisoned within the details of their work, so completely imprisoned there that they can neither talk nor think of anything else. We all know doctors whose table conversation is habitually limited to the gory details of recent operations. We all know ministers who can talk freely on only one subject—their last sermon and the number of people who came to hear it. What is it that happens to these bark-bound personalities? Life becomes harder and harder for them. It becomes harder and harder because these neat little patterns of interest and activity are invariably upset, because their pitifully small worlds are eventually and inevitably destroyed.

How can we break free from the details of our job? How can we save ourselves from becoming "bark-bound"? There are many ways, but each one demands deliberate, heroic, sustained effort. Each one of us can cultivate a hobby, but really cultivating one (not merely planting it and then letting it die) is an exacting task. Each one of us can assume a responsibility

ar removed from his usual type of work, but this requires initial courage and then a vast amount of ubsequent time-budgeting. Each one of us can deiberately enlarge the circle of his friendships, but his usually means doing kind things for people who ire strangely unappreciative. Hard work in every case, ut if we do the work what happens? Listen:

I shall cut windows for my soul,
Channels of splendor, portals of release!
Through my prison-walls I shall hew them
So that my soul may find a path outward.
With the strength of a determined will
I shall carve and fashion them—
Great windows fronting on immensity,
Gazing beyond Time and Space!
Then I shall breathe the air of a wider world,
My soul will have room to start growing,
My eyes will finally meet God's eyes,
And the days of my imprisonment will end.

II

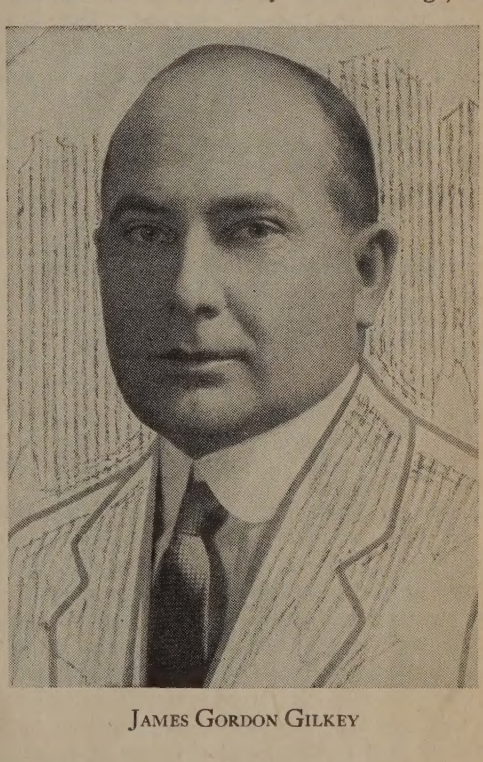
Here is another thing all of us must do if we are eally in earnest about making our hard lives easier. Ve must always view our problems and our anxieties gainst a large rather than a small background. Why? ecause then we shall see our difficulties in their true roportions. Seeing them in those proportions, we shall nd them unexpectedly small.

Bishop Fiske used to tell a story which illustrates is point perfectly. One summer many years ago he nd three of his friends went camping in Maine. One f the friends was a noted astronomer, another a noted eologist. The guide who accompanied the party hapened to be a rock-ribbed Maine Republican, and that immer he was greatly alarmed lest William Jennings ryan should be elected President the following Noember. What would happen if a Democrat, and a Democrat like Bryan, actually entered the White louse? One night the five men were seated round a mp-fire, and the astronomer and the geologist were iscussing the size and age of the universe. The asronomer gave several curious illustrations of the istance of the stars from the earth, and then the eologist talked for a long time about the age of the ocks and the vast period of time required to lift life om the level of microscopic sea-creatures to the level human beings. The guide listened in open-mouthed onder: it was the first time he had heard anyone xplain how big and how old our universe is. Finally e exclaimed with a sigh of relief: "Well, I guess it on't make a powerful lot of difference if William nnings Bryan is elected!"

A bigger background . . . and how it diminished the ze of his immediate anxiety!

Do you realize how much easier your life would come if you began viewing your problems against a rger background? You came to church this morng worrying about the present situation in Europe. Vill there be anything left there when the year ends? ow place behind that anxiety a new and larger backround, the background of Europe's long, long history. or two thousand years the struggle for land and people and power has been going on in Europe. One of Jesus' contemporaries, a European of the first century, wrote apprehensively of "wars and rumors of wars." Two thousand years of conflict—and yet Europe has survived. Europe will probably survive the next twelve months.

And as you came to church this morning you were worrying about this country of ours. Will the American system survive? Now place behind that anxiety a new and larger background, the background of America's long history. Three centuries ago, a great many people wondered whether a nation could ever be built in this wilderness. A century and a half ago, when



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Washington was trying to bring the thirteen States together, a great many other people wondered whether "a more perfect union" could ever be established. Two generations ago, when our Civil War was raging, even Abraham Lincoln wondered whether the wounds inflicted by that war could ever be "bound up." Our nation has survived three centuries of problems; it will probably survive the problems of the next few years.

And your other worries as you came to church today? You would never confess them, but I imagine they are the same as the worries all of us have. Worries over our children, our home, ourselves—and how can we master them? We can master them by viewing them against a bigger background. Against the background of a family love and loyalty which have been growing stronger year by year. Against the background of an affection and understanding which have been deepening for thirty, forty years. Against the background of a life span which begins here on earth and reaches forward forever in God's eternity.

View your personal anxieties against those backgrounds. Suddenly—here and now—life will become easier for you.

III

Here is my third suggestion. If we want to make our hard lives easier, let us remember that our own powers constantly fluctuate. As they fluctuate, the size of our problems fluctuates with them, but fluctuates in the opposite direction. When we are psysically or emotionally tired, our powers grow small and our problems grow big. Conversely when we are rested—physically and emotionally rested—our powers increase and our problems diminish. This fact is ingeniously stated in a charming verse by Amelia Josephine Burr. A small boy who is lying awake at night says:

> The apples falling from our tree
> Make such a heavy bump at night
> I always am surprised to see
> They are so little, when it's light.
>
> And all the dark just sings and sings
> So loud! I cannot see at all
> How frogs and crickets and such things
> That make the noise, can be so small.
>
> Then my own room looks bigger too—
> Corners so dark and far away:
> I wonder if things really do
> Grow up at night and shrink by day.

Yes! The size of things fluctuates continually. When we are tired, when we are worried, when we are emotionally upset and cannot sleep, a tiny task or a trivial vexation swells to the size of a mountain. But when we are rested, when our courage returns, when we gain command over ourselves, then that mountain shrinks to a molehill, and we find ourselves wondering how we could ever have been so frightened by it.

Surely you see the rule-for-effective-living which grows out of this fact! You and I must never attempt to solve problems, or undertake important pieces of work, when we are exhausted—physically, mentally or emotionally. We must deliberately postpone our efforts till our powers return. We must postpone our efforts for the simple reason that, during our period of exhaustion, our problems swell to double their true size, and the piece of work in hand sprouts—mushroom-like—unreal difficulties and non-existent complications. This is a rule we must follow when we are working alone: it is a rule we must follow with special care when we are working with other people.

Again and again I find myself recalling a statement made by a mother who had been particularly successful in training her children. When someone asked her how she had retained not only their love but also their confidence and their admiration, she made this discerning reply: "I have always acted toward them as I would toward delicately budded plants, plants which would be injured by the slightest awkward touch. I have never talked to the children, or written letters to them, when I was confused or miserable myself. I have never let them see me at the times when I, their mother, was spiritually bankrupt."

You want to make your hard life easier? Easier for yourself, and easier for the other people in your home? Remember that your powers fluctuate. Remember that as they fluctuate, your problems and difficulties fluctuate in the opposite direction. Then quietly resolve that you will never attempt a hard piece of work with tired hands, or regard as accurate the size of an anxiety seen by tired eyes.

IV

The final suggestion I make is one which was made to me many years ago. I wish I could tell you how much it has helped me as I have tried to manage my own burdens. If you and I want to make our lives easier, we must distinguish between the parts of our life which we can control and the parts which we cannot control. We must assume responsibility for the first—the parts we can control. We must leave with God the responsibility for the second—the parts we cannot control.

May I give an illustration out of my own life? There are certain situations relating to this sermon which are under my control, and for which I should assume full responsibility. I should assume responsibility for planning this sermon with the greatest care, writing it with all the skill and directness at my command, preaching it as effectively as I know how. Those are situations which are definitely and demonstrably under my control, and for which I should assume full responsibility. But there are other situations connected with this sermon which are not under my control, and for which I should never assume responsibility. I cannot force you to listen to this sermon. I cannot compel you to apply it to yourself. I certainly cannot make you put it into practice during the coming days. All I can do is hope that you will listen, think, do what the sermon suggests. All I can do is pray—as I do every Sunday before I enter this pulpit—that God will make the words I speak helpful to someone here. I must leave with God the responsibility for managing those situations, the situations I cannot control.

What I must do in regard to my preaching you must do in regard to a dozen tasks in your life. You must assume responsibility for some situations; you must leave with God responsibility for others. You want concrete cases? You must assume responsibility for training yourself to do your work supremely well, then you must leave with God responsibility for giving you the chance to put to actual use your perfected powers. You must assume responsibility for training your children to live intelligent and helpful lives, then you must leave with God responsibility for guiding the children when they leave your home and strike out for themselves. You must assume responsibility for living the best life you can on this side of death, and then you must leave with God responsibility for taking you through death and bringing you safely into the eternal life beyond.

This is what trusting God means. It means doing ll we can to manage the situations which are under ur control, and then leaving with God responsibility or managing the situations before which we are power-ess.

Do you realize what would happen if you drew his distinction between your responsibilities and God's esponsibilities? Instantly your sense of strain would anish. The hours and days, once exhausting and lmost unendurable, would become quiet and easy. ou would carry the burden of only one part of life; ne burden of the other part you would leave with ne who is infinitely stronger and wiser than you re.

Do any human beings actually win this victory? housands of human beings do. One rainy day in ebruary 1861 Abraham Lincoln left his home in pringfield, Illinois, for his inauguration the following onth in Washington. A group of friends and neigh-ors gathered at the railroad station to wave him fare-ell. The words he spoke to them as the train started re some of the noblest he ever uttered. Lincoln had ore than the ability to laugh: he also had the ability leave with God the parts of his life over which he ad no control. "I now leave, not knowing when or hether ever I may return, with a task before me reater than that which rested on George Washington. Vithout the assistance of the Divine Being who al-ays attended him, I cannot succeed. With that ssistance I cannot fail. Trusting the God who can with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere r good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be ell."

The power to leave with God God's share of the ad. The ability to make a hard life easier.

Wings

By Henry Hitt Crane

I HOPE I shall never outgrow my adolescent delight over the receipt of the morning's mail. he postman has always been to me a sort of perpetual mpensation for the loss of my belief in the reality of nta Claus. The surprises—some so good, some not good—which he bears on his daily rounds almost lidate my boyhood wish that Christmas could be ery day. Not that I have failed to receive my full are of anonymous diatribes. Due to my incorrigble timism, however, even these furnish their supple-ent of surprise. But fortunately such unexpected scords are invariably resolved into the happier har-ony of the vast majority of beautiful messages that me my way. Even the sad letters are often lovely their appeals for help, particularly when they reveal ch sturdy faith in a friendship that invites the shar-g of sorrow as well as joy.

And speaking of "life situations," where are they ore vividly and poignantly presented than in a min-er's mail?

I shall never forget three letters that arrived one dark morning. Like some startling conjunction of the planets these messages came together, making the dark sky bright and beautiful as with a newborn sun.

SONG TRIUMPHANT OVER TRAGEDY

The first letter I opened was from a valiant lady I had know all my life. Beautiful, richly endowed physically, but even more affluent in her mental and spiritual possessions, she had begun life with great promise. As a girl she early revealed outstanding artistic ability in many areas. But her major passion and delight was music. She was possessed of a heavenly voice. Her eager desire for adequate vocal training was amply gratified. She studied assiduously, and with excellent teachers. For three years she lived in Italy and France, working with some of Europe's best tutors. She returned to this country with great expectations. Her high hopes and her recognized ability promised a brilliant career as a concert soloist or an operatic star. But she "fell" in love. Although she was quite unaware of the direction of her emotional drive, it was a "fall," tragically enough, not an ascent. A smooth, accomplished, professionally successful medical doctor, recently made a widower, laid siege to her affections, and by the skillful use of his well developed wiles, eventually won her heart and hand. So they were wed—and lived *un*happily ever after. With his incorrigible selfishness and his almost sadistic cruelty deftly disguised under a cloak of sanctimoniousness and deferential manners, he subjected this singing spirit to a domestic tyranny that was as ingenious as it was insufferable. Innumerable petty persecutions, restrictions, refusals were inflicted with honeyed words at one moment, and with vicious insinuations at another. Torn between an inherited aversion to divorce and an insuppressible yearning to be free, she yet suffered his cruelty with incredible endurance.

Finally, her husband died—and that helped some; but not much, for he contrived to leave her penniless. Undaunted, she supported herself and her growing daughter by giving music lessons. And now, with an urge to write prodding her, she has penned me a sort of thumbnail autobiography. For in this letter, with brilliant abridgments and clever aphorisms, she had recapitulated her life story—honestly setting forth the picture which was so full of shadows, distorted perspective and apparent frustration. But the last sentence stabbed me with its swift, turning thrust of unsuspected triumph. Resorting to the language she loved, she summed up the quintessence of her life: *"Vraiment, j'ai faite une chose ici bas: j'ai chantée!"* "Actually, I have done one thing down here on this earth: I have sung!"

With a sudden awareness I realized that it was true—utterly true. In spite of everything, she had kept on singing—not in public, to be sure; her selfish spouse had long since stopped that; but in her heart, and whenever alone, aloud. But how could she? I asked myself. Thousands who have never had to endure a tithe of her suffering have grown silent, or their songs

have soured into cynicism or self-pity; and yet she has kept singing—spiritually triumphant. How can one suffer so, and never lose one's song? I wondered.

THANKSGIVING OUT OF DEFEAT

A second letter in that memorable morning's mail was from a young man in a CCC camp—a winsome, unforgettable American, born in this country of Italian parents. I had met him some years before in a certain Pennsylvania college where I had been speaking. We had struck up an acquaintance there that had rapidly ripened into friendship. We had corresponded quite regularly. I knew well his story—and for concentrated misfortune it was prime. His parents, as a young married couple, had migrated to this land that they might have a family which would have a chance to amount to something. They settled in a coalmining town, and Peter, the young husband, went into the mines. In the course of a dozen years four children were born to these happy, loyal, new Americans—two boys and two girls. Dominic was the eldest, a bright, industrious, eager lad with vast ambition and sterling character. It was a great day when his parents sent him off to college to become an electrical engineer. But shortly after that proud beginning in his new academic world, Dominic received a telegram: "Father killed in mine explosion. Come home."

He went—but only to take up the burden which his father had had blasted from him. With characteristic ingenuity and resourcefulness, he not only worked his way through college, but he earned enough money on the side to keep the family intact and help his brother and sisters through their schools. At last he graduated, and secured a good job with the Western Electric Company. But his wrist began to trouble him unduly. In high school, he remembered, he had been hit there with a baseball. Upon examination, he was told that it was a malignant tumor. It was imperative that his hand be amputated. It was. But that was only the beginning. Three more operations were subsequently performed, and the last one took the entire arm well into the shoulder. He has been out of the hospital about a month, had secured a job as an instructor in a CCC camp. The letter before me had been written on a typewriter, picked out with one hand. But it was more than a letter—it was a song!

"It is wonderful here in the woods," it read. "I went out this morning as the sun was coming up. It seemed as though all the birds in the world had come together for a song fest. But actually they were there to furnish the sylvan symphony I needed for the solos I was singing in my soul. God! but it's good to be alive!"

Dominic—singing! But how could he? I wondered.

WINGS—THE KEYNOTE OF A LIFE

The third letter gave me the clue. It bore a messoge of great grief, but hidden at the heart of it was a gem of lustrous truth—like a pearl, the product of a secret power that can transform pain into something beautiful. It was from the son of one of the best friends I have ever had. My greathearted friend had suddenly died in a western hotel, and his only son was asking me to conduct the funeral services. What a grand person the father was: pioneer in religious education, superb teacher, dauntless champion of great ideals, master of practical details, able administrator and best of all, a magnificent Christian! Yet he had been subjected to frightfully unjust and disgraceful treatment by certain less able colleagues. Their misunderstanding and jealousy would have embittered or broken an ordinary person. He did break, actually, but he rallied again—and wrote a significant book summing up his convictions and the major lessons of his varied experiences; yet in that volume there was not a hint of bitterness, resentment or desire for revenge. It was a swan song of pure spiritual triumph. And now he had gone to his rich reward.

I read the letter again. "Doubtless," it concluded, "you are aware of the keynote of my father's life, the secret of his amazing courage, power and faith. I think it is best expressed by his favorite little verse—a copy of which I found in his pocketbook. It's a translation of something by Victor Hugo, I believe:

> On a branch that swings
> Sits a bird that sings—
> Knowing that he has wings!

There it was—the clue I had been groping for, hoping for—and all set forth so clearly and so simply. Now I understand how they could sing—my valiant lady, Dominic, my victorious friend—and the vast company of the undefeated everywhere. They had wings—and they knew it! And I understood, too, why so many others were songless. No wing power.

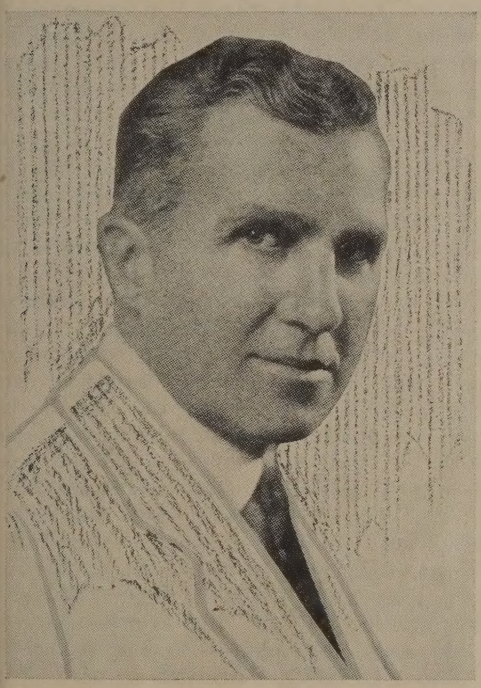
TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE

Isn't it a rather suggestive and fair generalization to say that there are, from this point of view, but two kinds of persons in the world: first, those with souls songs that cannot be stilled no matter how much they are made to suffer; and second, those whose souls are sinisterly silent, or are timorously sighing, or are furiously screaming whenever adversity even so much as threatens them.

It used to be that we could divide people into two groups called the haves and the have-nots, the rich and the poor, the secure and the insecure. But not now. When embattled nations are doing their utmost to blast everything to pieces, what guarantee has any man that his own good fortune will last the night? With wars shaking entire continents in its mad convulsion, what property is immune from devastation, what person is exempt from suffering? No one is safe any more. Security is only a relative term. The whole earth is like a storm-swept tree, and the inhabitants thereof like wind-driven birds, cling precariously to the swaying branches of awful insecurity. Who knows how long before his own branch will break? We are all in the same predicament. But even so, there's a difference—a very conspicuous difference—in the way we take it. Some keep right on singing, and others quit. He who

ings in times like these surely must know he has wings. uppose the branch does break. What of it? He has ther resources that are always available. Wing ower!

There is nothing particularly new about all this. ndeed, it is very old. The prophet Isaiah understood ne principle involved, and stated it clearly and com- letely. *"They that wait upon the Lord,"* said he, *shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with ings as eagles!"* That is to say, if anyone would be utely aware of his wing power, he must make God ery real; for to the degree that a man becomes keenly onscious of the available resources God Almighty has



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his disposal, to that degree he realizes what limit- s power he can draw upon, if he but fulfills the nditions necessary to its appropriation. "To wait on the Lord" is not a matter of delay, postponement deferred expectation. The phrase implies another nnotation altogether. It simply means to be com- etely attentive to God's will, to be so continually servant of his desire that only one thing really mat- s, namely: the doing of his will, the prompt response his desire. Once God becomes the major obsession men, they will "renew their strength" readily enough and to such an extent that they will "mount up th wings as eagles."

The tragic fact that underlies the spiritual impo- ncy of so many of us is just this: God is not real to He is merely a theory,. an hypothesis, something be argued about, debated or discussed, perhaps; but t to be taken too seriously. Or he is little more than inherited tradition, a legend, a fetish—something to be deferred to, perhaps, or even reverenced, but certainly not obeyed implicitly.

MAKING GOD REAL

If we could only make God real! If only he were as real as he was in that elemental, unforgettable play, "The Green Pastures." Remember that moving scene when Moses has to surrender the leadership of the Children of Israel, just as they are about to enter the Promised Land? For more than forty years he has given them his magnificent best. Now he is nearly worn out. Reluctantly he gives over his command, and standing aside, he gives a final order to "Go forward." Then begins the great trek. The immortal company marches away. With every beat of the marching feet Moses slumps as though pomeled with body blows. Finally the last man disappears and Moses is left alone. No, not quite alone. "De Lawd," unseen by Moses, steps out from behind a great rock, silently approaches the spent leader of his chosen people, and gently puts his hand on Moses' shoulder. Without turning, the grand old man recognizes the divine touch. A strange new strength flows through his weary frame. He straightens up until he is erect—re-empowered. Then he speaks: "You's wid me, ain't You, Lawd?" And "De Lawd" answers: "Co'se I is, Moses. Co'se I is!" If only God were as real as that—what wing power we should have!

But how can we make God real?

All men are equipped with at least two fundamental faculties which, if rightly used, may lift them to the heavens. They are *faith* and *love*. These are the wings of the spirit whereby we may mount up as eagles. But to develop and continually to renew our strength so that we can use our wings we must "wait upon the Lord." In other words we must actually come to believe in him with such abandon that we will dare to adventure, risking everything on our trust in his kind of universe—a universe in which "all things work together for good to them that love him" sincerely enough.

LACKING—FAITH AND LOVE

The reason why the wings of the many won't work, is not that we are devoid of faith and love. These faculties are universally inherent. The trouble with the well meant and all too common practice of urging people to have more faith and more love, is that the injunction misses the point altogether. Everybody has faith enough; likewise love. The amount is quite abundant—one wonders, at times, seeing the way it is misapplied, if it is not too much. But that is not the issue. The main question is, What is the object of your faith and love? In what do you really believe? What do you most ardently love? Upon what are you "waiting," i.e., to what are you giving your wholehearted attention and most vital interest? This makes all the difference as to whether you actually possess wings—or just weights; whether you can fly—or just flounder.

Suppose we were to ask ourselves with downright

honesty, Do we really believe in God—the kind of God Jesus revealed? One whom we can call Father, and yet believe that he holds the universe in his control? Do we truly have faith in spiritual forces? Are we willing to risk our lives on their adequacy, their power to protect us? Are we ready to hazard our destiny on the validity of the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule, the Ten Commandments, the Law of the Harvest—that what we reap we sow, be it good or evil? Is our faith fixed on these eternal values, these abiding truths, these inexhaustible resources —all that we mean by the all-wise, righteous, omnipresent God? If so, make no mistake, we are possessed of wings! And well may we sing, no matter how menacingly the branch may swing upon which we are temporarily perched. Such faith is evidence enough that we are "waiting upon the Lord," and thus are renewing our strength, so that should branches break, we "shall mount up with wings as eagles."

A NATION OF MATERIALISTS

But the world, for the most part, is sickeningly songless today. Why? Not because of lack of faith, certainly. With a frenzied fury we believe in the most fantastic theories and the most futile forces. All the way from horoscopes, mediums and crystal gazers, through the suffocating maze of things, money, position, up to the ultimate idiocy of guns and tanks and bombing planes, we rush back and forth putting our faith now in this, now in that, and finally with a desperate, prodigal gesture—like a despairing gambler risking all he has left on a single throw—we pour out our billions on "defense," and prove that despite all our professions, we are basically gross materialists. For the tragic fact is that we believe in physical violence, above all else. We believe that material force is the final arbiter and disposer of our destiny, that might makes right, that God is on the side of the best bombers. Thus, we prove ourselves to be idolatrous. We bow down to false gods that can never save us. Hence our wings are paralyzed; they become dead weights that bind us to the earth. So when danger threatens we become even more superstitious for a while, and then when our spurious deities are proved impotent, we scream in fear and rage, and finally become silent in dread disillusionment or in death—and never a song is heard.

And love—that other wing, as it were. What do we really love? On what do we fix our most ardent affections? "The closest, deepest trial question of the human heart," says Ruskin, "is simply, What do you like? Tell me what you truly like, where you find your deepest satisfactions, and I will tell you what you are." That is, we can tell whether we are winged spirits, or merely weighted bodies. Loving the things of the flesh, the ephemeral pleasures—what shall become of us when they pass, as pass they will? Loving wealth, security, comfort and ease, getting our basic satisfaction from things that we can touch and call our own—when the world cracks up, as it seems to be doing right now, and every *thing* is put in jeopardy —what is left when they go, as go they must one way or another? Small wonder we speak of the "weight of the world." Loving it too fondly we become earth-bound—wingless—and our sky is lost.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth . . . but in heaven . . . for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." A weighted heart or a winged one? that is the vital question.

THE SPIRITUAL TRIUMPH OF CHRIST

But what of those who obey the divine injunction, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength"? These are they who know the good, the true and the beautiful, and glory in them; who think on "whatsoever things are honorable, just, pure, lovely and of good report," and incarnate them; who "mind the things of the spirit," and delight in all their enduring values, deriving such satisfaction from them as knows not satiety nor hunger. In short, these are they who "wait upon the Lord," "renew their strength"—and sing! For they know that whatever dire difficulty befalls them, they can "mount up with wings, wings, wings!"

Lest some assume that this is all mere rhetoric, consider the most significant single historical fact of all the years. The most valiant Spirit ever clothed in human flesh one dreadfully dark day found himself painfully approaching a swaying tree whose branches he was forced to hang upon. Murderously cruel that tree had ever stood as the symbol of ultimate tragedy, and on it the body of our Lord was broken. But not his Spirit! For even as they crucified him, he sang. And his song was supreme proof of his spiritual triumph. Looking down on his murderers, he sang an unforgettable prayer: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." And then he soared—out of their reach and power—as he sang again: "Into Thy hands, O Father, I commend my spirit!" What more superlative demonstration could there be that "they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles"?

On a branch that swings
Sits a bird that sings
Knowing that he has wings.

Some day people will learn that material things do not bring happiness and are of little use in making men and women creative and powerful. Then the scientists of the world will turn over their laboratories to the study of God and prayer and the spiritual forces which as yet have hardly been scratched. When that day comes, the world will see more advancement in one generation than it has seen in the past four.

Charles P. Steinmetz.

It is sometimes easier to judge a man's religion by what he thinks about his property, than by what he thinks about Jesus.

Roy L. Smith.

When Great Events Make Common Tasks Seem Trivial

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

THIS terriffic world situation affects us all in many ways, but one effect in particular every one of us must feel: it makes our ordinary daily tasks seem trivial. Here is a stupendous upheaval, threatening to shake civilization to pieces, the greatest world revolution, they tell us, since the downfall of the Roman empire, and yet we go on, day after day, with our common duties, household tasks, personal relationships, office routine, professional service, getting on with people, helping a little here and there if we can—how trifling it all seems!

To be sure, this feeling of mediocrity and humdrum is one of the major curses of human life anyway, even in ordinary days. Because of this many people die long before they are really dead, their lives losing zest, and a dull, drab, gray fog of commonplaceness settling over them. One American humorist, after trying to make his diary sound important, says that at last he gave it up and began writing every day: "Got up, washed, and went to bed."

Many of us, however, who in calmer times did not surrender to this mood, are tempted to it now. We look at the world today with telescopic eyes—the events are far-flung and prodigious—and then when we turn those same eyes upon our day-by-day routine, we can hardly see it. It is, therefore, with a real situation in mind, affecting us all, that we turn our attention to a saying of Jesus: "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much."

This much at least is clear, that to have our commonplace living elevated, dignified, and made meaningful, would be a redeeming experience. Why was Charles Dickens so popular? Because he did just that. He took ordinary people, limited, queer, commonplace, and he made their story more thrilling than the life of kings. They walked across his pages filled with interest, humor, gentleness, courage and zest. Stefan Zweig is right in saying about Dickens: "He unveiled the poetry that was ambushed in the prosaic. . . . He gave to simple things and unpretentious people a glory all their own. . . . To thousands, nay to millions, he revealed where to find the everlasting spark in their uneventful lives, where to look for the glow of quiet joy hidden beneath the ashes of the familiar."

Today we turn to a greater than Dickens, who says to us amid the stupendous events of our time: "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."

One element in our American temperament runs counter to the truth we are trying to get at. We Americans have been notoriously impressed by size. A big country, big buildings, big business, the biggest this or that—we are noted for our interest in large dimensions, and to say of anyone that he does things in a big way, is for all Americans a compliment. Someone has called this attitude "Jumboism." Unhappy the man today, however, who has no other view of life than that, for the big things are going wrong. Vast empires at war, whole races set against whole races, world-wide conflicts of economic imperialism, great nations outlawing religion and turning to atheism, one powerful land after another accepting communism, fascism, nazism—who can find light and hope in the way the big affairs of the world are going?

But now ask, Where are the sources of encouragement, so that we do keep going, sometimes with high heart, our joy in living refreshed, and even God made real? Surely the answer lies in little things. I know some homes that are a heaven on earth, some friends whose presence kindles all the best within, some characters making of small garden plots lovely places, some quiet souls carrying tasks and burdens with splendid courage, some spiritual lives that make one sure that God is there, and some groups of people, too, organizing good will to bring at least a little light in dark places.

This in general is a true picture of our world today, isn't it? The big things are going wrong, and the experiences that kindle faith and courage, dust us off and set us on our feet again, and sometimes even put a song upon our lips, come from sources characterized not by quantity but by quality—small, vital, quiet, deep, real, spiritual. In a world like this we may not say, then, that it is unimportant how we handle our daily lives. That is where most of the world's light comes from today, that, as Portia said, shines like a candle in this naughty world. It comes from the way good people handle small affairs well. Let that light die out and the whole world would be dark indeed. What if Jesus, in a sense far profounder than we have commonly supposed, was right when he said, "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much"?

Nevertheless, lest anyone should suppose that we are going to neglect the world's large affairs, let us organize our thought by asking, What are the great problems of the world today? What would you say they are?

I

Surely, for one thing, saving democracy. We all would say that. Let us start with that, then, and see how the truth of the Master's saying operates! It is a dangerous fallacy to suppose that democracy is mainly a matter of vast political overheads and constitutional arrangements, and to forget that democracy is the most spiritually demanding order of society ever proposed, its indispensable foundations in the character and attitude of plain people. One of the most interesting things in our time is to see the skeptics and cynics come over to join the preachers. I could name many who have done that. A letter came recently from the magazine *Time,* saying an article on that subject was to be published in its pages and asking any new names that could be suggested. Mr. Walter Lipp-

mann is typical. A few years ago we preachers were attacking Mr. Lippmann because of his frankly skeptical writings about religion, but now listen to him:

> What is left of our civilization will not be maintained, what has been wrecked will not be restored, by imagining that some new political gadget can be invented, some new political formula improvised which will save it. Our civilization can be maintained and restored only by remembering and rediscovering the truths, and by re-establishing the virtuous habits on which it was founded. There is no use looking into the blank future for some new and fancy revelation of what man needs in order to live.
>
> The revelation has been made. By it man conquered the jungle about him and the barbarian within him. The elementary principles of work and sacrifice and duty—and the transcendent criteria of truth, justice and righteousness—and the grace of love and charity—are the things which have made men free. Men can keep their freedom and reconquer it only by these means. These are the terms stipulated in the nature of things for the salvation of men on this earth, and only in this profound, this stern, and this tested wisdom shall we find once more the light and the courage we need.

Well, that is preaching.

What has happened in one man after another to cause this change—not, it may be, in theoretical conviction, but in emphasis? Concern for democracy has caused it, and the perception that the huge political overheads of the democratic system will collapse like a house of cards save as democracy is sustained from underneath by the moral character and attitudes of millions of plain, ordinary people in the midst of their daily lives.

Many of us grew up in a generation when it was taken for granted that ever increasing democracy around the world was the inevitable wave of the future. "Printing, which comes necessarily out of Writing," said Carlyle, "is Equivalent to Democracy: invent Writing, Democracy is inevitable." But today we see one dictator after another seizing the printing press and using it to crush democracy. Invent the radio, and is democracy inevitable? But the radio can become one of dictatorship's most potent instruments. No, the taproot of democracy is not in any vast, large-scale thing whatsoever—not in mass printing, mass radio, or even mass politics. The taproot of democracy is deep in the daily life of the people. Democracy begins in homes where children are welcomed into the comradeship of a cooperative family life. It grows strong in schools where respect for personality is given expression and training, alike in its privileges and its obligations. It is disciplined in the running of small enterprises, neighborhoods and communities, where men and women learn to do common things together. It is evidenced in daily business and social intercourse, where tolerance amid difference, and conference rather than violence are used to decide issues. Democracy is a way of daily living, and it gets its ultimate vitality in citizens whose consciences have been touched at least a little by the love of God, and who practice what Lord Moulton in his significant phrase called voluntary "obedience to the Unenforceable."

Well, here in the thick of our daily, ordinary, commonplace living is where the fate of democracy will ultimately be decided, and yet we talk about the huge events of our time making our daily life seem trivial. That is getting life all out of focus. Ordinary daily living — homes, schools, churches, small enterprises, neighborhoods, communities, personal character—never mattered more in the world's history than it does today.

Suppose that the democracies should be outwardly defeated. I do not think they will be, but suppose they were, and the vast political overhead of democratic nations should collapse! Where would democracy find its resurrection day? You know! There are millions of us who have been brought up in democratic homes, democratic schools, democratic churches, who have had woven into us as part of the texture of our lives respect for personality, cooperation with others, the love of liberty. There, inside plain people in daily living, is the vitality that, though men should crucify democracy outwardly and bury it, would raise it from the dead again and roll the stone away.

So, there are two ways of facing our generation: one is to say that its stupendous events make our commonplace daily living seem mediocre, humdrum and trivial; the other is to see that even in so critical a matter as maintaining the foundations of democracy, Jesus is everlastingly right. "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."

II

Come further now and ask what another major problem of our generation is. Surely, getting on with people. There are many ways of describing war and its causes, but the gist of the matter is that people cannot get on with one another. I wonder if anybody wants this madness of modern warfare. Winston Churchill is marshaling a whole empire to desperate battle, but were one to ask him what he really thinks about war, he would say, what indeed he did say, in 1936. War, Mr. Churchill said, used to be "cruel and magnificent"; now it is "cruel and squalid. War has ceased to be a gentleman's game. To hell with it!" But despite all such revulsion against war, here it is, for a reason that carries the whole matter into the heart of our ordinary daily life: people find it hard to get on with one another.

Where, then, is the ground of our hope that sometime, even as great nations, we can get on with one another? That hope is grounded on the fact that in a thousand and one ordinary, day-by-day, little experiences, good will does work, friendship is effective, tolerance and mutual understanding do compose differences, cooperation displaces hostility, and we do get on with people. Do not say that these victories of friendliness and good will in daily personal relationships do not matter. They are the leaven in the lump.

Remember the motto of the American Friends' Service Committee: "It is better to light a candle than to

urse the darkness." So! We are tempted today to end much of our time cursing the darkness. Well, it dark. So what! Thank God for every candle of riendliness and good will, every victory of tolerance ver bigotry, and cooperation over hostility, however mall, assuring us that still light is in the world! "It better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."

It is particularly interesting that of all people Jesus hould have felt this. He too lived in a time of stu-endous events. Take two phrases as typical of his era: the Roman empire"—that was the major fact of his eneration, and that was huge; "the Kingdom of God n earth"—that was his primary ideal, and that was

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ll-inclusive. Yet, listen to this strange man dealing ith the Roman empire as a fact and with the Kingdom f God on earth as an ideal! "Whosoever shall give drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold ater . . . he shall in no wise lose his reward." Whoso shall receive one such little child in ny name receiveth me." "Inasmuch as ye did it unto ne of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it nto me." If any man have a hundred sheep, and one f them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety nd nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray?" To the man with the one talent esus heard God saying, "Thou oughtest therefore have put my money to the bankers." And of the oman who cast one farthing into the treasury, he aid, "Verily I say unto you, This poor widow cast in nore than all they." There is a glorification of the ommonplace, unequaled, I think, in history, by one hose coming was to shake the world.

Moreover, when now across nearly two thousand years we remember him, what do we recall—that he had an incidental conversation with a woman of Samaria at a well-side, that a man named Nicodemus one evening came to call upon him, that he visited Mary and Martha in their home, that Zacchaeus once invited him to dinner, that blind Bartimaeus called to him from the roadside, that he laid his hands on little children and took them in his arms. When one stops to think of it, what we chiefly remember about Jesus is astounding—commonplace, ordinary, everyday living lifted up and made to illustrate the ideas, attitudes and principles that alone can redeem the world. His whole life is a commentary on his own words: "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."

III

Consider another major problem of our time—liberating personality. That is the essence of our despair about the world today, this rise of oppressive regimes that imprison personality. One of you here this morning had lived all your life in Vienna, a scientist loving your work. Then the *Anschluss* took place and nazism moved in. Nobody outwardly disturbed you. Your daily life went on apparently as usual. You could have remained there untroubled. But something had happened. The air was stifling. You tell me that the climax came when one day you went out alone among the great mountains that from your boyhood you had loved. There you were amid the solitude of the mountains, but even the mountains were not the same. You could not endure them. Liberty was gone. So you are here today.

This, then, is one of the great problems of the world—setting personality free—but do we mean that this is a problem in the large only and not in the small? Does any one of us pass a single day without dealing with people, circumscribed, impeded, imprisoned, whom we can help to set free? During our Civil War Senator Charles Sumner, absorbed in his great plans for the abolition of slavery, was asked by Julia Ward Howe to meet some friends. He declined. "Really, Julia," he said in his top-lofty way, "I have lost all my interest in individuals." "Why, Charles!" she answered, "God hasn't got as far as that yet."

We are not saying that we can do nothing directly about the vast problems of the world. We can. We are citizens who should make our influence felt through every channel open to our impact. But for most of us the major part of every day must still be spent on common tasks. If, being common, they look also commonplace, it is because there is something the matter with our eyes. Some people make commonplaceness out of everything; some people in the humblest circumstances, say:

> Earth's crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God.

This is one of the most significant contrasts between people, and nowhere is this contrast more evident than in personal relationships. We thank God for America and her liberty, but, for all that, we could still have been imprisoned personalities had it not been for some

people who thought that daily living was important, that making good homes, good schools, good churches was important—people who tried to see what there was in us that could be released and brought out, who believed in it when we did not, and kept on believing in it when we were discouraged. The Africans have a proverb that any fool can tell how many apples there are on a tree, but that it takes a wise man to tell how many trees there are in an apple. So! Who of us here does not have reason to thank God for some people who in ordinary, daily relationships guessed what might be grown out of us? If liberating personality is one of the major problems of the world today, then he who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much.

IV

Finally, the preservation of Christianity is a major problem—and if that is not a personal matter of daily living, what is? In one great nation after another, institutional, organized Christianity is crippled or dead. In Russia it has gone. The Russian church has not a single seminary left in Europe for the training of its priests. In Germany the organized church is so limited, so watched and censored by the Gestapo that on any public issue it cannot even whisper. But even in Russia, they tell us, increasing numbers of peasant families are teaching their children about Christ. Christianity is still there and growing, not as an organization but as a movement among the people. And they tell us of the powerful drive of personal Christianity in Germany, underground, not institutionalized but private and individual. That is the way Christianity started in the first place in the Roman empire; that is always the source of its ultimate dynamic and vitality. Hostile governments can smash its institutions, but so long as multitudes of plain people in ordinary, everyday living, cherish its truth, its resurrection day will come.

Indeed, think of the case even here in America where the church is free. What is the one argument for Christianity to which there is no answer? I do not know a single theological argument that cannot one way or another be answered. I do not know any great Christian organization that is not so faulty that a man, if he wants to, cannot one way or another justify staying out of it. But when one sees an honest-to-goodness Christian life, a person so humble, it may be, that he has no idea he is making any impression, but who in daily duty-doing and burden-bearing is a Christian, I do not know the answer to that.

My friends, these are days of prodigious events, but all the more and not the less important is our daily living. To be sure, it is not easy to handle little things as though they were significant. Life is full of humdrum and drudgery. Every great vocation, even, however thrilling as a whole, has long stretches in it of prosy and wearisome routine. George Herbert the poet sang,

> Who sweeps a room as for thy laws,
> Makes that, and the action, fine.

Well, that is a noble sentiment, but, after all, George Herbert was a man and probably he never had to sweep a room; at least he did not have to do it day after day after day. To dignify drudgery is not easy. Yet it was an English servant girl—I wonder if she is in England today still carrying on—who wrote these lines:

> Lord of all pots and pans and tins, I have no time to be
> A saint by doing lovely things, by watching late with Thee,
> Or praying in the dawnlight, or storming Heaven's gates.
> Make me a saint by getting meals and washing up the plates.
>
> Warm all the kitchen with Thy love, and fill it with Thy peace,
> Forgive me all my worrying and make all grumbling cease.
> Thou Who didst love to give men food, in room or by the sea,
> Accept this service that I do—I do it unto Thee.

Our Hope and Our Battle

By Mark B. Strickland

I have fought a good fight. II Timothy 4:7.
For we are saved by hope. Romans 8:24.

ONE evening, directly after I had concluded a discussion period with a group of young people, several clean-cut youngsters came forward to ask me some rather pertinent questions about this mad world. One question has stayed with me ever since. It was put to me by a young lady about eighteen or nineteen years of age. "What," she asked, "can we do about this terrible world? It doesn't seem to get any better and sometimes it seems to get worse." Perhaps it was her earnestness rather than her words which held me. Nevertheless, such a query stirs one's imagination.

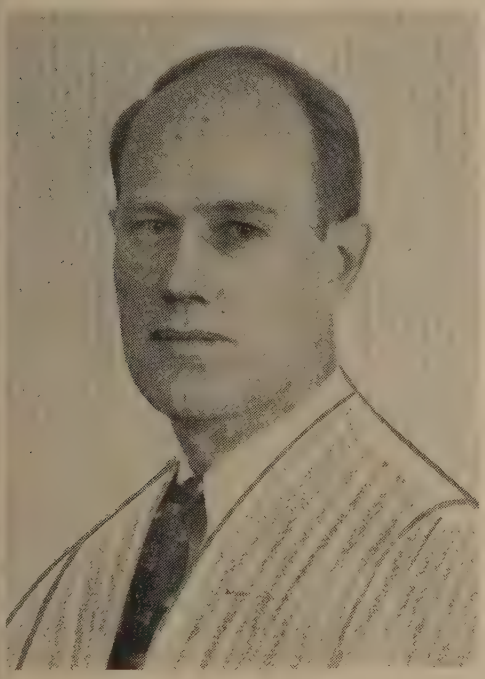
This mad world is a challenge to us all, especially to youth. It dares us to be optimistic and it dares us to fight. The world has always done so and it always will. Jesus, you remember, told his followers to be in the world but not of it. The Master could see the evil and still be confident of the possibilities which the soul has even in the midst of darkness. He dared us to be optimistic and he dared us to fight.

IN A HARD WORLD

Most young people have had it dinned into them that they are living in a hard world. Certainly, if any generation has a difficult time ahead of it, this one has. These are some of the things I see in the future for youth: war, with all its ugly ramifications, hate, sorrow, cynicism, disease and death. Also I can

rision after the war the spread of bankruptcy, poverty nd disillusionment. They will tell us that this war s different, but like all wars, afterward will come the wakening and the regrets. Men will turn from the hurches, they will deny God and question the worth f righteousness. Along with this spirit will come a noral letdown. This is not a pretty picture, but it is he eternal story of man's first reaction to his own rrors.

If one looks for trouble and only trouble, then a lack picture of the world can easily be constructed. et me give to you a word-picture from another gener- tion: "Every man wants to write a book and it is



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vident that the end of the world is speedily approach- ng. Bribery and corruption abound. The children no onger obey their parents." These sentences were niseled upon a tablet in ancient Assyria some 4,741 ears ago. From that day to this we find that people ave been prophesying the end of the world. In one ense they are correct. The world begins anew with ach generation and dies again with every passing eneration. But this is a challenge and an oppor- unity, not a calamity. We live in a trying world, ut who has not lived in one?

As Christians we are not going to be defeated by nhappy situations. We follow two young men, and host of saints since, who knew how to take life in ride. Both Jesus and Stephen kept their optimism n a pessimistic time. Both failed as the world saw . Yet in death they won a spiritual victory. They ared to be optimistic and they dared to fight.

We are not concerned about foolish optimism, ptimism blind to the facts. Neither are we interested in pessimism which fails to recognize the good. There is an ugly side of life and there is also a beautiful side. Take war, for example: as much as we detest it, we should realize that even in the heart of such blackness there is much that is hopeful. We think that the objectives for which the Germans are fighting are wrong. We admit that many of the aims of the English are colored by selfish motives. Yet young men on both sides are giving up their lives for causes which they believe demand such a price. It is not war which will save civilization. War is hideous and futile. It is this idealism in the hearts of youth which gives us hope. Perhaps we grow discouraged because idealism is so badly directed. Nevertheless, it will be out of idealism in the German, the American and the Englishman that eventually a new world will be built. This is cause for sound optimism.

'LOOK UP AS WELL AS DOWN'

We take our blessings for granted. We see and enumerate only our troubles. Just as it is in the matter of news, the commonplace things in life receive little attention. But let a serious accident occur and immediately it receives front-page importance. If our attention is centered solely upon the misfortunes of the world, and we continually ignore the commonplace blessings which surround us, we soon become confirmed pessimists. It is time that we, like the psalmists, thank God for such simple things as these: the regularity of stars, the persistency of sunshine, the refreshing rains which water our earth and the fresh air we unconsciously breathe.

Dare to feed your soul upon God as Christ did. Look up as well as down. Before long you, too, will be an optimist. Aristophanes was correct in warning man, "Who stares at the stars, stumbles on stones." But we should also bear in mind that he who sees only the stones, never sees the stars. Anyone who sees stars as well as the stones will become a confirmed optimist. Christ was not beaten by the world. He saw God's face in the simple blessings which crowded in upon him. He looked up as well as down, in as well as out. Thus did Christ dare us to be optimistic in a troubled world.

But suppose we can see nothing but darkness ahead? Yet we can still hope, for our souls are illumined by the Light of God. Jesus said: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Anyone who will take time to seek the will of God can find the Light and with it to guide can see a way through the darkness.

THE LIGHT IN DARKNESS

Every soul has its affinity with God. No matter how deep we sink in despair, the Light is still with us to guide us back. Nothing can ever put the Lamp out. Man may bomb a million homes and blackout a thousand cities, but never can he extinguish the Divine Presence. Though the Light of the World burns dimly at times, still it burns, never to be snuffed out by war

or any other trouble man can devise. Thus can we hope.

We cannot judge life solely by the newspapers we read. They too often reflect the paganism of our modern world and not the Christian viewpoint. For a full week one Boston daily paper carried practically nothing but war news on its front pages. Nothing but tragedy caught our eyes. No wonder then that some people grow pessimistic and ask, "Where is the Light?"

The Light is ever present. It is for us to find it. A short time ago I came across an interesting story told by Dr. Langdale at the National Youth Radio Conference. One year a student in the graduating class of a university was missing. As a freshman he had been one of the most promising boys in his class; in fact, he had been elected president of his class. Toward the close of his studies he secured employment, and while working met with a fatal accident, the result of a serious explosion. While at the hospital his father visited him. The words with which the boy greeted his father were, "Dad, you're a happy sight for sore eyes." Several days later the boy passed on, but his father never knew that the lad had been blinded by the explosion.

It is this spirit within every soul, sometimes bright, sometimes dim, which guarantees the eventual victory of hope over despair. Such a story as the above would not take as much space in the newspaper as four or five words in an average headline. Still it is a truer picture of man's real stature. It makes us optimistic about this mad world we live in.

The danger in optimism is its misuse as an escape from reality. We too often ignore evil. We refuse to struggle against the forces of unrighteousness. Thus a person loses much that is meaningful in life when he refuses the challenge to fight. We are here to wage war.

DARE TO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

Let no one misunderstand me. I do not refer to conflicts waged by armies. Such wars are usually escapes from the real problems. This present holocaust is apt to prove as futile as the one which began in 1914. We must leave this to the verdict of history. We are referring this morning to all battles waged by the human spirit. No one can escape this struggle. As Christians we believe that ultimately all victories are won in the soul. Yes, only in the soul.

When we are fighting for a good cause, even a defeat does not mean failure. Jesus failed. So did Stephen. Their victory was in the way they handled defeat. Life is like a football game in this respect. It is not so bad to lose if we have given our opponents the opposition our strength afforded. But if we have failed to meet the challenge with the best we have, then we deserve both shame and condemnation. Such a defeat is a sin against the Spirit. We have wronged the Creator who has made us with a spiritual will to fight.

Any young person who has played football knows what a lacing-out a coach can give his team when it has been loafing on the job. A certain team had been noted for its fine fight, its superb attack and its stone-wall defense. During this particular game it fought listlessly. The team didn't have the punch. At the end of the half the score stood 6 to 0 in favor of the opponents. As the players ran off the field they knew instinctively what to expect from the coach. The squad entered the "gym," took off their uniforms, rubbed themselves down, redressed, sat down and waited. But no coach! Just as the signal was given for them to go out on the field, the coach stuck his head through the door and said sarcastically: "All right, girls, it's time for the second half."

And did those boys fight! Before the second half was over they had run up three touchdowns. The coach had a right to be disgusted, not with the score, but with the poor fight the youngsters had made in the first half. No wonder they planned to redeem themselves during the second half of the game. Any young person who wants a thrill out of life must get in and fight. To do less than that is to fail oneself as well as the Creator. The world has need of brave souls, people who are willing to struggle against the kingdoms of darkness. The world will be changed, not by a sword, but by God working through the human spirit. This is our battle.

THE STRUGGLE PART OF GOD'S PLAN

Parents and older people sometimes seek to free youth from this spiritual struggle. Sometimes they actually pamper young folks into an easy life, thus robbing them of the very stuff out of which life is made. They forget that one generation cannot pass on to another the gifts of the Spirit. These must ever be won anew. We can pass on to others our wealth, libraries, churches, books and universities, even our names. We cannot, in any final sense, pass on a culture, a good life or a noble spirit. God has placed us here to fight our way to righteousness and to win our way against the adversaries of the good life. It is part of God's plan. Let us accept the challenge. This is our battle.

The story of Alfred Russell Wallace and the butterfly demonstrates the meaning of our struggle. He came upon a beautiful creature fighting to free itself from the imprisoning walls of its cocoon. The neck of the cocoon seemed cruelly small to Mr. Wallace, offering a hopeless battle to the butterfly. Moved by sympathy and love for the creature, he took his lancet and slit the prison open, thus liberating the winged loveliness. But had he freed it? Its colors never fully developed. Its wings never lifted it into graceful flight. The butterfly drooped, fought hopelessly and soon died. It died because it had not been permitted to fight its way into its strange new world. God had intended that it should have this struggle in the development of its glory.

This world is our battle. It was the scene of Christ's struggle and Stephen's, too. It has been the battle of every saint who has broken from this earthly prison into the glories of immortality. With Paul

re can say: "I have fought the good fight, I have nished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth here is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, hich the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at at day: and not me only, but unto all them also that ve his appearing."

We are here to fight. It is God's way of making us en. To try to release life into eternal glory without struggle is to rob us of the divine beauty God has aced in our souls. Therefore, I commend to you this rrible world with all its evil and ugliness; I com- end to you this struggle against war, unemployment, ime and social injustice. And if we prove true to is call of the Spirit, we shall know the buoyancy of hristian hope; we shall fight through until that day hen our souls shall soar with power into the presence God.

"For we are saved by hope."

'I Don't Feel Like It'

By Harold C. Phillips

For even Christ pleased not himself. Romans 15:3.

OUR subject today comes home to us all. There is no one here who has not and does not often y in response to appeals of one sort or another, "No, don't feel like it." Many of the things we do, and any of the things we leave undone have no other ason behind them than just that—"I don't feel e it."

Now to be sure our feelings, our moods, our emo- ns are not the only determiners of our conduct. here are broadly speaking three other factors that spire action. We have intellects, minds, and some- nes our behavior is determined by whether or not a rtain course of action seems to us rational or sen- le. Moreover we possess a moral sense and some- nes our conduct is motivated by the sense of obli- tion or oughtness. That is to say, I may do what I n't feel like doing because I feel that I ought to do

Then again, we possess wills, and though I may y, "I don't feel like it," through the power of my ll I can yet do the thing which I may not feel like ing.

By and large, however, there can be little doubt at the most powerful drive in a man's life is not in s mind, nor in his moral sense, nor in his will, but in s emotions, his feelings. The mind may say, "This the wise thing to do"; the moral sense may say, This is the right thing to do"; the will may say, This I will do." Then the emotions walk right in though they were the complete boss of the estab- hment of our personality, and what we actually and ally do may be neither sensible nor right, but what feel or do not feel like doing. And in saying this ere very naturally come to my mind the words of the ostle Paul, as he spoke of Christ: "Even Christ eased not himself." Christ was no slave to his feel- gs.

I

Let us observe, in the first place, that the reason our feelings are so powerful is that they belong to our primitive endowment. Primitive man felt long before he reasoned or willed. The actions of primitive man were not first of all reasonable or morally discriminating or even willful, but instinctive. His personality was a sort of powerhouse in which the dynamo was his emotions, his basic bodily urges and needs—hunger, sex, pugnacity and all the rest. His actions were expressions of those instinctive urges, which are exceedingly strong. I suppose it is fair to say that, speaking generally, the line of demarkation between what we call "barbarism" as opposed to what we call "civilization" was drawn by the growing awareness of the reason, the moral sense and the will. These are the things which began to put harness on the cave man in an effort to civilize him, restrain him and redirect his prodigious power to socially useful and creative ends. But, like a wild horse, our basic primitive instincts often break the harness and run away with us.

That is what is happening today. The condition of our world proves that our so-called "civilization" is a rather thin veneer. If you scratch its surface ever so slightly, close under the surface you encounter the cave man with his primitive biological passions. Forgetting now, for the minute, all the complicated causes that have brought us where we are, and forgetting too the high moral motives and ideals that do unquestionably inspire the hearts of millions of our fellows who would rather die for freedom than live without it, and looking at the scene before us at its face value, there is no escaping the conclusion that only one word adequately describes the wholesale destruction in which we are all becoming increasingly involved, namely—"madness." What we are witnessing today is a betrayal of the reason, a perversion of morality, a distortion of the will, and the triumph of unbridled emotion and passion. As is well known, fascism, communism, nazism are all dynamic movements. They are almost fanatical. They are based primarily on and appeal to the primitive passions of man.

You see then how basic our emotions are; so powerful that like a rising flood they break the levees which the reason, the moral sense and the will try to build against them. This is why we often say, "I don't feel like it." Because in so saying we are giving expression to something quite basic, instinctive and powerful.

II

But now, in the second place, let us ask whether such a statement is an adequate guide for our behavior. To be sure there is much to be said for the statement. Our instinctive feelings are not always misleading or unworthy. There are times when we may trust them. As a matter of fact we may be thankful that there are some things we do not feel like doing. Most of us avoid many of the grosser evils of life simply because they make no appeal to us, we

do not feel like committing them, they present no temptation to us. Our personalities are something like receiving sets. Some of us are so tuned that we pick up impulses from one station the while we are more or less immune to impulses from another, and vice versa. We ought to be glad then that there are some things we do not feel like doing—we do not feel like committing murder or robbery, or indulging in gross physical excesses. On the other hand, sometimes the things we do feel like doing are the things we should do. We may feel like reading a good book, attending a service of worship, writing a letter or making a call on a friend in trouble, and so on. Our feelings, then, are not wholly unreliable guides. There are many times in our lives when we may with safety trust them.

All of us, however, surely know that there are other times when we cannot with safety do so, but must resist them or redirect them. If our lives by and large are guided by no other pilot than our likes and dislikes, our fleeting moods, they are not likely to reach very significant goals. Our emotions are in a certain sense the most valuable part of our endowment; like the engine of a train, they furnish the driving power to our lives. But the track over which they take us is equipped with certain regulative devices. There are switches and lights and signals, designed now to shunt us off in a new direction, now to slow us down, now to speed us up, now to bring us to a full stop. Just to start the engine going and let it take us where it will and when it will, without these regulative devices of the reason, the moral sense or the will, is obviously bad business.

Even Christ did not do that. "Even Christ pleased not himself." Why "even Christ"? Because if any man could have trusted his feelings, surely he could have done so. Of all men, his motives, his feelings, his emotions were most pure and noble. If anybody could have with safety just "let himself go," do what he felt like doing, and refrain from doing what he did not feel like doing, certainly our Lord was that person; yet even he did not do that. We know he did not because we know that he was tempted, not just once at the outset of his ministry, but you may be sure all through his life. "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations." He "was in all points tempted like as we are."

Now there could be no such thing as temptation unless there were an inclination to yield to it. To be tempted is to be lured by something which you feel like doing yet know you ought not to do, or which you don't feel like doing yet know you ought to do. Christ, as we know, met and mastered both those temptations.

As we read the record of his marvelous life, it seems to unfold in such beauty and harmony, such strength and nobility, that we are likely to assume that here was a man who did what was good and right and true without a struggle, that it was as easy for him to resist his feelings as "falling off a log." If that be so, then how explain his forty-day struggle in the wilderness, his long vigils in the night, his agony in the Garden of Gethesmane, his prayer ". . . not my will, but thine, be done"?

> Cold mountains and the midnight air
> Witnessed the fervor of Thy prayer;
> The desert Thy temptations knew,
> Thy conflict and Thy victory too.

No, even Christ did some things he did not feel like doing, and refrained from doing other things he may have felt like doing. "Even Christ pleased not himself." Even he. And if he did not do that, surely none of us can. "The disciple is not greater than his Lord."

III

Let us then, in the third place, try to see why the motto "I don't feel like it," or "I feel like it," is not by itself alone an adequate guide for our life.

For one thing, the "I" is too much in the foreground. It is strange, but undeniably true, that a man never does so badly by himself as when he thinks too much of himself. It is quite reassuring that all reputable modern psychology is emphasizing this fact, which has been one of the elementary insights of Christianity for over 1,900 years. For there is perhaps no word of Jesus that is more fundamental than this: that selfishness, self-centeredness, egocentricity, self-absorption, self-indulgence, call it what we will, is the most deadly enemy of the self; and that is now, of course, a psychological axiom.

Professor Allport, the Harvard psychologist, in his book on personality, tells of a little three-year-old boy who every day would walk across the street to his grandmother's house, step in and, apropos of nothing, boldly announce: "Grandma, I won't." Well, that is one way surely to assert the self, but it is not the way to enrich or expand the self. One may get a certain amount of self-satisfaction from that, but no self-development.

"I define personality," says one writer, "as the extent to which the individual has habits and skills which interest and serve other people. . . . Its essence is self-sacrifice, not self-gratification." For the self develops not of itself, or by itself, but rather by doing commerce with things that lie outside of and beyond itself. Let us imagine a tiny baby set down all alone on a desert island. And let us imagine the impossible—that somehow he survived and grew, all of himself and by himself, until he reached maturity. That, of course, is imagining the impossible, for even if he survived and reached physical maturity, still he could never have a mature personality. His self would be ingrown, and an ingrown, self-centered person is always an immature person—one that has never grown up. This hypothetical baby then would really not have a self at all. I submit, however, that this motto "I don't feel like it" may build a wall around any of us right here in Cleveland almost as effectively as a desert island would, and keep us from achieving maturity. For a self-absorbed, self-centered, ingrown personality is always immature.

It is right here of course that one comes upon the

matchless stature of Jesus' life. "Even Christ pleased not himself." His ego was not at the center of his personality. When he prayed he thought of others; when he sorrowed it was for others—for the city over which he wept, for the shepherdless multitude that moved him to compassion. And when he died it was for others. He was not crucified because he broke any law to further his own personal advantage, but rather because he tried to break the fetters of an evil system of life that was harming others. This is why Christ is way and above the world's maturest man—"the full grown man" as St. Paul calls him.

Years ago there was a popular song the chorus of

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which went, "I want what I want when I want it." We used to think that that was the voice of the real he-man speaking. Now we know it was nothing more than the peevish cry of the nursery.

Observe again that this expression, "I don't feel like it," works only in the realm of voluntary choices, and it is in the realm of voluntary choices that our personalities are most surely tested and revealed. When some of us were students at Union, Dr. Fosdick shared with us an experience of his boyhood days which I do not think he would mind my sharing with you. He said that one morning when his father was leaving for work, he called out to his mother: "Tell Harry to mow the lawn today, if he feels like it; tell him he had better feel like it!"

We all know what that means. Sometimes on a Monday morning you don't feel like going to the office, just as it is that some Sunday morning the minister may not feel like going to the pulpit; but we have to go whether we feel like it or not. There are certain things we have to do, obligations we have to meet, duties we have to perform, responsibilities we must assume, quite regardless of our particular mood or feeling. There is, however, another area that surrounds our lives, namely, that of voluntary choices, and it is in this area that the real quality of our life is most surely revealed. It is not the things we are compelled to do, but those we are impelled to do, voluntarily, that reveal our real selves.

Now, the Christian belongs to this realm. We have to go to our office, but we don't have to go to church; we have to assume certain obligations and responsibilities in our work, we do not have to assume similar responsibilities or obligations in the church. But it is the things we do not have to do, yet freely choose to do, that reveal the real quality of our characters.

It is quite difficult at times, for example, for ministers to get people to assume positions of responsibility or leadership in the church. Many people like to come and listen, come and receive, come and enjoy; in short, come and get. But surely that is not all of religion. On the contrary, Jesus says: "Take up"—"Give"—"Minister"—"Go ye"—"Serve." The most valid test of our Christian life is not the size of our intake, but the size of our outlet. Why is it that so many of us "sit in the bleachers" and do not join in the game? "Lack of time," we say. Perhaps. "Lack of ability," we plead. Maybe. But I am rather sure that more often than not the real reason is neither lack of time or lack of ability, but lack of inclination—we don't feel like it.

Remember, however, that that statement reveals a lot about ourselves. For it operates, as we have said, only in the field of our voluntary choices, and it is this area of our life, the area in which we are not compelled but impelled, that reveals our scale of values, our sense of what is important or most worth while, reveals the things we put first, the things we put second, and the things we may not put at all. If we are merely slaves to our feelings, it is unquestionably true that the best and most worth-while things of life may never win our support.

IV

Finally, let us say that the finest antidote for the "I don't feel like it" mood is a new awareness of the Christian gospel. We said at the beginning that there were three helps for man in his effort to gain mastery over or give direction to his emotions, namely, his reason, his moral sense and his will. It is well known, however, that time and again none of these separately, nor all of them together, have been a match for the emotions.

Many of us have found in Christianity a more effective antidote than any of these. The reason is this: that though Christianity appeals to the reason, quickens the moral sense and strengthens the will, it does more than that. It enables us to master our moods, our feelings, by reaching down into the feeling itself and transforming that by another feeling. It is

often true that only an emotion is strong enough to master an emotion.

Now the key word of Christianity is not reason, though assuredly Christianity is reasonable; not morality, though Christianity is assuredly moral; not the will, though Christianity involves the will. The key word of Christianity is love—love which enlightens the mind, quickens the moral sense, empowers the will. "God is love," "Christ also hath loved us," "Beloved, if God so loved us we ought also to love one another." And it is love, mark you, which, though it begins in a feeling, ends in a deed. "Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? . . . Feed my sheep."

You can see now why the best cure for the "I don't feel like it" or "I do feel like it" mood, is Christianity. It overcomes this feeling with another feeling which is more worthy, creative, life-giving. Of course, left to ourselves, we don't feel like it. We are a privileged group, we live in a privileged community, sheltered, protected from those scenes of want, poverty and dirt in which so many of our fellows live. It is exceedingly easy for us to allow all this to create in us the mood of indifference toward the needs of our fellow men. But we can never do that and remain Christian. For the heart of Christianity is not a temperament or a mood; it is the resolute call of love, love which begins in a feeling and culminates in a deed of loving service for others, in or beyond the church and parish. Christian love, expressed through active, resolute good will and service, is the best defense against the tyranny of our enslaving moods.

"Even Christ pleased not himself." "For the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

We scribes and pharisees—we are the bulwarks of law and order and of existing religion. Let Christ come today and we would crucify him—if the law allowed us to do so—just as we scribes and pharisees did nineteen hundred years ago. For is it not better, indeed that one man should die rather than that all the existing order should be overturned, and that law and religion should perish? Howard Pyle.

Announcement

In next month's issue will appear the first of the series of Preacher Problem articles on various phases of preaching and sermon-making to be contributed by Arthur W. Hewitt, Halford E. Luccock, Gaius Glenn Atkins, William L. Stidger, Charles W. Gilkey, James D. Morrison and others. Dr. Hewitt's article will appear in the October issue.

The Preacher Problem article is omitted this month to make room for the six sermons announced for this special Life Situations Number.

Learning to Handle Our Worries

By Roland Gilbert Hohn

Some time ago I listened with rapt interest while an old pioneer who has lived for nearly a century told some of the experiences which made up his life story. The tales he told were thrilling enough by themselves, but when added together they would put many a best-selling novel to shame. The record of his life was one of victory and defeat, of joyous overcomings and of disappointment. He recounted many pleasant things, but there were many tales of heartbreak, tragedy, sudden deaths, poverty, illness and near escapes. During the course of our conversation I said to him: "I should think that with all you have been through in your life, you would have become distrustful of life. At any rate, looking back over your experiences I should think you would have worried yourself to death contemplating the sinister prospects of the days ahead. How did you ever manage to keep so calm and serene, and arrive at your present great age without going to pieces under the strain?"

And this is what he answered (and it sounds a good deal like the testimony of the apostle Paul): "On the contrary, I have learned to accept whatever has been in store for me. I have discovered that there is a Power that comes from above that helps one through almost anything that might happen. . . . And so I don't worry about what tomorrow may bring. I have always needed all my energies to get the most out of today and to put the most into today, so that I never could afford to worry about tomorrow."

'Be not anxious for the morrow'

Now of all the practical problems we human beings face, one of the most common is that of learning to handle our worries. Even on ordinary days we quake with inner anxiety over the possible outcomes of many a situation, but during dreadful times like this many can hardly bear the burden of their worries. To be sure there is a sense in which concern over the future is wholesome. It adds vim and zest to life; and what is more, no real progress, personal or social, would be possible unless one were concerned to some extent at least about the morrow. When the Master said, "Be not anxious for the morrow," I do not think he intended his hearers to relax into carelessness, to give up caring about the future. For even a minister who is not concerned about the future of his work and his church would soon be looking for another job. So there is an important and necessary kind of worry, if one may here use the term, which none of us can afford to give up.

The kind of worry which Jesus was probably talking about is what someone has called "squirrel-cage anxiety." Every one of us is familiar with the experience of going round and round in circles, always ending up where one begins, coming to no conclusions,

achieving nothing creative. It is this useless waste of emotional and mental energy which is our present concern. The question is, How can we learn to handle our worries?

Some of us never manage to get out of the past. We worry about the things we have "left undone that we ought to have done." Johnny comes down with a cold, and we worry because we didn't insist that he wear his rubbers to schools, or that we didn't make him eat his spinach. An investment which we made goes bad and we lose a lot of money, and we worry because we didn't take the other man's advice. It is so easy to fall into the habit of looking back and wondering if perhaps we wouldn't have fared better had we taken another turn in the road.

Then there are some who worry about things present. All of us are familiar with people of this kind. Being short, they worry because they aren't taller; or being fat, they worry about getting thin. If the weather is too hot, they worry about that. They worry about how they look, what other people are thinking, and whether or not they will get through the day all in one piece.

WORRYING ABOUT THE FUTURE

But most of us worry about things to come. Like our primitive ancestors we dread the unknown. Many a man can be heroic enough if he can stand up and grapple with something that he can see, but the thought of having to fight some unknown foe who lurks around tomorrow's corner is almost more than most of us can bear.

Even under normal circumstances a great deal of our mental energy is used up in worry about the future, but in an uncertain time like this many of us give way to our worries so that we do little else besides. As. Dr. A. J. Cronin puts it: "It is hard nowadays for the average man not to worry about the future. He hears the whisper of inflation and knows all about those ruinous taxes. He's worried about the bit of cash he has laid up for a rainy day, worried as to what his insurance policy will be worth when it comes to be paid up. Yes, he is dreadfully worried about the family's security in the days ahead."

And so one might go on suggesting other things in the future about which we worry. Right now I suppose many of us are worried about what Hitler is going to do next, and whether or not he might come over here and start dropping bombs on us. At least one person, so I am told, has so worried about such a possibility that he has outfitted a cave in an uncharted spot in Canada. Here he has stored away enough food to last for ten years. Thus, many of us worry greatly in squirrel-cage circles about the future.

Most of us do not need any argument to be convinced that worry is often an evil, an unproductive habit. We are all familiar with the fact that it drains our energies and emotions so that our creativeness and effectiveness in many a situation are undermined. Worrying is so altogether uncomfortable that I have yet to see a person who does a lot of it, who would not do almost anything to be able to get along without it. Oh, that we only knew how to handle our worries!

Now and then someone tries to come to grips with this problem by saying to himself: "Now, I'm *not* going to worry anymore." However, the conquest of worry is not as easy as that. If one could roll up his sleeves, clench his fists, grit his teeth, and with one tremendous surging of the will put an end to worrying, many more of us than now do could relax into serenity and confidence. Overcoming worry is more than a matter of will power. The problem goes much deeper than that. We are like the man, in this respect, who joined a Don't Worry Club and then wrote a verse to describe his experiences:

> I joined the new Don't Worry Club
> And now I hold my breath—
> I'm so scared for fear I'll worry,
> That I'm worried most to death.

So one never gets over the habit of senseless anxiety by signing a pledge or joining a club. Worry is but the symptom of a sickly way of life, and we need more than a little salve on the outside to clear up the complexion of our outlook; we need spiritual vitamins, and iron, fresh air and exercise, so that ability to deal with the often tragic concern of life comes from an inner radiance, a serene and confident interior strength.

A COMMON-SENSE PHILOSOPHY

First of all, we must develop a common-sense philosophy of life. This is not easy. It takes time and honest thinking.

To begin with, many of us are under the wrong impression regarding how life ought to deal with us. We started off somewhere with the assumption that when everything moved along smoothly and serenely, when no evil befell us or those whom we love, that that constituted the ideal life. Consequently, whenever anything went wrong we learned to say to ourselves, "Life is bad!" and subsequently we learned to dread anything which threatened to disturb the peace and security of our days. But life is not like that. It is rather a mixture of pleasure and pain, freedom and bondage, joy and sorrow, achievement and failure. But anyone who demands of life only the pleasant is asking for a lot of disappointment. What is more, some of the worst things that have happened to us, have often been the best things that could have happened to us, because the inner strength we have gained in some great and difficult overcoming has made us the finer persons that we are.

When I was a boy, I learned a verse which has helped to keep me cheerful about the disagreeable aspects of this business of living:

> It's easy enough to be happy
> When life moves along like a song
> But the man worth while
> Is the man who can smile
> When everything goes dead wrong.

Again, a common-sense philosophy of life demands that we take a realistic look at our worries. Look

back for a moment and recall to mind the many things you have been worried about that have never come to pass. Large sections of our thought have been taken up with worry about possible consequences which have never materialized. Once a man begins to discover how much of his worry is groundless it makes it easier for him to give it up. Besides, much of our worry is the result of leaving tasks undone, responsibilities unfulfilled. An old adage comes to practical use at this point: "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today." A man who can go to bed at night knowing that his duty for the day has been done, has at least put an end to one source of worry and anxious concern.

LOOKING FOR THE BEST

But not only does a common-sense philosophy of life demand a realistic look at our worries, but an optimistic look as well. In recent years Pollyanna and her "glad-game" have been widely discredited. There is something just a bit annoying about a person who can even be glad when he breaks a leg. Nevertheless, the wholesomeness of looking for the best in every situation can never be discredited. Cynicism lays hold upon the soul like a disease, and when a man begins to look for trouble he rarely has difficulty in finding it. At any rate, who would not rather make a friend of one who looks at the world through rose-colored glasses than one whose whole attitude toward life suggests that he had been weaned on a pickle!

At this point it might do well to suggest that the cultivation of a sense of humor goes a long way to take the edge off of our worries. The story is told concerning a young couple who were pacing the floor one night with a collicky baby. The cries of the child were pathetic and the young parents who were going through this experience for the first time could hardly keep the tears back. Then the young father made a remark which broke the tension, made them both smile, and in the smiling gain a new perspective on their mutual worry. This is what he said: "I'm certainly glad that we don't live at the north pole where the nights are six months long." A sense of humor helps greatly in learning to handle our worries.

GETTING AWAY FROM SELF

In the second place, not only must one develop a common-sense philosophy of life in order to learn to handle worry, but one must learn to take *self* out of the center of life, and put something else more significant in its place. And this turns out to be a very difficult thing to do. For down through the years we have accustomed ourselves to measuring everything in our experience in terms of how it affects ourselves. One's judgment of people, for example, is more likely to be in terms of whether or not they are pleasing to oneself. Here as in many situations in life we are the victims of conditioning and training patterns. We habituate ourselves to asking the question, "How is this going to affect me?" So while we worry about what the enemies' bombs are doing to the innocent victims of Europe's war, we are more worried about what they possibly might do to us some day. And so we go through life measuring everything in terms of how it is going to affect ourselves—and to what unfortunate consequences!

Some of the best worriers I have ever known have been people who were all wrapped up in themselves. On the other hand some of the most effective and creative personalities I know are those who worry very little. The secret is revealed in the biographies of those who have devoted themselves to some cause or interest more important than themselves. Who of all people on earth would you expect to be free from the

ROLAND GILBERT HOHN

habit of worrying—the person whose first interest is himself or the person whose life is devoted to something bigger than himself? One cannot imagine John Wesley spending much time in worry? He was too busy with a great cause in which he believed with all his heart. One of the fundamental laws of our being is that our effectiveness in any situation is directly proportional to our devotion to it.

Some time ago this letter came from a radio listener: "Why is it that preachers go on letting people living ineffective, worried, harassed lives, when they know full well that one of the redeeming influences that can come to any man is the transforming power of creative work on behalf of others? For years I was a nervous wreck. All of my waking energies were spent in concern over myself. Not only was I physically sick because of the strain I was carrying, but I was a disagreeable person with whom to get along. One day the Boy Scouts sent out some publicity material including a blotter. On the back of that blotter were

ese words: 'Write your biography in the life of some y.' That set me thinking. What a dreadful story at would be! I wasn't the least bit proud of myself d simply couldn't imagine my biography in any lad's e. But it got me started. And now the miracle has ppened. Because I got interested in something more portant than myself and my business, I've changed. s, I have. I think even my dog notices it."

And so when a man gets *self* out of the center of e, and puts something much bigger in its place, ere are sure to be transforming consequences.

PUTTING RELIGION TO WORK

Finally, not only must we cultivate a common-sense ilosophy of life, not only must we take *self* out of the nter of life, if ever there is to be control over our orries; also, we must make our religion function.

There are three kinds of people in the world. First ere are those who make no profession of religion. hey neither profess nor practice, having no profession practice. Second there are those who profess, but not practice. It is in this group that a great many us belong. Third, there are those who profess and o also practice. These are they whose religion is ore than a mere verbal confession of faith. Their ligion is a way of life. Running through it is a pro- und conviction that God is very near, that he is an ailable Friend.

The difficulty with the religion which many of us ofess lies at this point. For the ultimate test of a an's faith in God, it seems to me, is whether or not runs deep enough to be a sustaining influence under ery circumstance of life. Dwight L. Moody used to y that worry was a sin, and he arrived at his conclusion by this logic: Lack of faith in God is a sin, and worry is the result of a lack of faith.

When, upon the hillsides of Palestine, Jesus looked into the faces of his fellow countrymen, what did he see? He undoubtedly saw telltale lines of worry and anxiety. For life was not easy then. Totalitarianism, which we so fear, was the order of the day. Life was tremendously uncertain. No mother could be sure that she would have her family by her side at sunset time. Poverty and disease were widespread, and no one seemed particularly to care. No one? Jesus taught otherwise. He told them that God cares—God who cares for all of his creation. To be sure, evil things happen to God's creation, but he still cares, and is able to sustain.

And so, when the center of a man's religion is the experience of a God who cares, why should anyone worry about the morrow? The important issue we all face is this: Life being what it is, is my faith in God vital enough to overlay life with quietness, serenity and confidence in spite of outward circumstances? With the assurance of the nearness of a loving Heavenly Father, why should any man worry about what tomorrow may bring forth?

One day two birds were overheard by a poet as they talked to each other:

> Said the Robin to the Sparrow:
> "I should like to know
> Why these anxious human beings
> Rush about and worry so?"
>
> Said the Sparrow to the Robin:
> "Friend, I think that it must be
> That they have no heavenly Father
> Such as cares for you and me!"

A Pastoral Prayer

By W. Ernest Collins

WE thank thee, our God and Father, for this day of rest; we would use it for the recreation of r bodies, our minds and our souls. The source of our renewal is with Thee.

Here we are, removed from the distracting worries our everyday tasks. No burden of toil rests upon this day. Minister to each one of us as we wait fore Thee. Cleanse our hearts and minds from all at would mar the beauty of our worship, for in hy presence we realize how often we have thought e unkind thought, said the unchristian word and en guilty of actions which have not had in them e spirit of Him whom we serve. Purge us of all at makes us less than we ought to be. Haunt us th the best that we may serve Thee and our fellow an more worthily.

We realize, too, that in our hearts and our comunities are the makings of conflict. In family feuds, selfish jealousy, in deep-rooted prejudice, in our strust of one another we become part of the denial of Jesus Christ in our world. We confess our sins. Forgive us, O God, as we promise one another and Thee that we will, in Thy strength, live in the spirit of Jesus.

We pray that understanding and good will may soon come to our world. Help us in these days to create conditions in which a just peace may be possible. Give us the courage which our times demand. We would share in the fellowship of suffering of all our brethren as we think of undernourished children, of distraught wives and mothers, of those driven from home and those living in daily dread of destruction. We would not add to the weight of the world's sin and sorrow; we would be among its saviors.

Answer the unspoken prayers of this congregation. Be with those we love wherever they are. Comfort those who are in sorrow, place Thy cooling hand on fevered brows and give us all Thy peace. We ask it in the name of Him who taught the way of life, even Jesus Christ. Amen.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

REV. JAMES GORDON GILKEY *has led* the activities of South Congregational Church, Springfield, Mass., since 1917. From 1923 to 1930 he was professor of biblical literature at Amherst College. Dr. Gilkey's church has become widely known for its ministry to the "life situation" problems of individuals, a fact that is reflected in the titles of his volumes of sermons, among which are: *Secrets of Effective Living, Solving Life's Everyday Problems, Managing One's Self, Getting Help from Religion* and *The Problem of Following Jesus.*

Rev. HENRY HITT CRANE *has been min*ister of the Central Methodist Church, Detroit, Mich., since 1938. Earlier pastorates were in Gorham, Maine, Newton, Mass., Malden, Mass., and Scranton, Pa. He received his education at Wesleyan University, Connecticut, and at Boston University, and was ordained in the Methodist ministry in 1916. During the First World War he was in "Y" secretarial service in England and France.

During the past twenty-six years Rev. HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK has been minister at the Riverside Church in New York city, also professor of practical theology at Union Theological Seminary. Dr. Fosdick reaches an audience of millions through his Sunday afternoon radio broadcasts. Among his books are *The Meaning of Prayer, The Meaning of Faith, The Modern Use of the Bible, The Power to See It Through* and *Successful Christian Living.*

Rev. MARK B. STRICKLAND *is an alum*nus of Colgate University, Newton Seminary, Boston University School of Theology, also of the graduate school of the latter institution. Following his service as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., he became minister of the Ashland Federated Church, one of the earliest and strongest federated churches in New England. After eight years' service there he went to the First Congregational Church, Stoneham, Mass., where he succeeded Rev. John Homer Miller, now of Hope Church, Springfield, Mass., and Rev. Harold W. Ruopp, now of Central Church, Chicago.

Born in Jamaica, Rev. HAROLD C. PHILLIPS came to the United States in 1912. Graduating from Denison University, he received his M.A. degree from Columbia, and his B.D. from Union Theological Seminary. Ordained in the Baptist ministry in 1922, he was pastor of First Church, Mt. Vernon, N. Y., for six years; since 1928 he has ministered at First Baptist Church, Cleveland, Ohio.

Rev. ROLAND G. HOHN, *as were his* father and grandfather, is a Methodist minister. He studied at the American University, Washington, D. C., and received a B.S. degree at the University of Minnesota. His early intention was to be a physician but he was influenced by Rev. Richard Raines to enter the ministry. Graduating from Boston University (S.T.B. and M.A.), he served as one of the ministers (the other being Dr. Raines) of Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church, Minneapolis. He now ministers at the Methodist Church of Willmar, Minn. Mr. Hohn conducts a "life situation" radio counseling program—"The Quest for the Best"—which has attracted widespread interest.

Rev. W. ERNEST COLLINS *is minister* of the Central Congregational Church, Topeka, Kan.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

MILTON R. SCHROEDER, Fleischman Memorial Baptist, Philadelphia, Pa. "An Easy Religion." I Kings 12:28, 29—"It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods . . . and he set the one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan."

W. ARTHUR GRAY, Methodist, Eureka, Mo. "V Is for Victory." I John 5:4—"And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

O. WALTER WAGNER, St. John's Evangelical and Reformed, Jackson, Mich. "The Man Without the Hoe." Rom. 9:21—"Has not the potter power over the clay?" (Labor Day sermon.)

JAMES C. PERKINS, Federated, Schroon Lake, N. Y. "Anonymous." II Cor. 6:9a—"As unknown, and yet well known."

ROLAND G. CARTER, First Methodist, Zanesville, O. "When Suffering Comes." II Cor. 4:16—"Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day."

CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY, First Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, Pa. "Job: The Man Who Made Satan Quit." James 5:11—"We count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job." (No. 3 in series on "Six Great Men.")

R. DOUGLASS RAE, First Baptist, Bloomington, Ind. "Luxuries a Christian Cannot Afford." Luke 18:22—"Go sell all that thou hast."

PAUL P. YOUNGER, Ramona Pk. Community Church, Alhambra, Cal. "Can Man Baffle God?" Jer. 32:27—"I am the Lord the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for me?"

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

Text used (write out the text)

Name of minister

Name of church

Address

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

SPECTACULAR beyond anything that has occurred since the war began—excepting, perhaps, the flight of Rudolf Hess—was the meeting of the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain somewhere in the north Atlantic.

Rendezvous on the Sea

The significance of their conversation in terms of practical results cannot be appraised at this time. No doubt the formal eight-point statement of agreements is destined to become as historically important as Woodrow Wilson's famous Fourteen Points. But the fact that Mr. Churchill has consented to any expression of Britain's peace aims marks a change of attitude for which Mr. Roosevelt must be given credit. Whether the eight-point statement will have the effect of vitalizing the forces of potential revolt in Germany—and this is the main purpose of any such commitment to a post-war policy—is highly doubtful. Under the point which calls for the disarmament of Germany while the victors retain their military resources to impose a new order on Europe, the German imagination is left to conjure up the most extreme possibilities, including dismemberment as a necessary condition of enforcing disarmament. The net effect of the agreements is to lay upon the United States the ultimate responsibility for winning the war. That the President's commitments will create an increasing "interest" demanding at last our main power seems now inevitable.

The Book of the Month

MAN'S VISION OF GOD. *By Charles Hartshorne. Willett, Clark & Company, $3.00.*

IN SELECTING Professor Hartshorne's book for the place of honor, I am bound to begin with a word of caution. It is a hard book to read! It is written for minds accustomed to the concepts of philosophy and logic, but for those whose minds are fairly well furnished with such concepts it will abundantly repay every ounce of effort and patience required for its perusal. It took a lot out of me, but it put a lot more in! The author writes with a mastery of logic which as occasionally made me think I was reading a work by a medieval scholastic. But the thesis of the book is anything but medieval. It deals with the most modern, as well as the most ancient Christian, conception of God. The author claims that this conception now stands in need of rigorous logical examination. The medieval conception of a God perfect and absolute in all respects is now giving way to a conception of God perfect in some respects but not in all. To distinguish the perfect respects from the "perfectible" respects in the nature of God is the task which this book sets for itself. Dr. Hartshorne takes as his regulative thought the biblical dictum that God is love. If this dictum is true, it sets limitations to the power and knowledge of God by the very fact that a loving God takes into account the other beings whom he has created and endowed with freedom to make decisions of their own. Man as the object of God's love thus has power to increase or decrease the happiness of God, to add to or subtract from his power, and to realize or postpone the divine knowledge of actuality. The argument is far more complicated than my too brief statement of it. The author is plowing in a fresh field, and I predict that future writers on the theistic problem will regard his contribution as marking a turning point in both philosophy and theology.

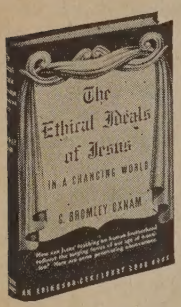
A Thought for the Month

ADVOCATES of America's participation in the war envisage a more or less clearly defined future which they assume will result from an allied victory over Hitler's Germany. With Germany rendered powerless, by whatever means (including the aid of communist Russia), it is assumed that the victors will carry over into the peace the same mood and the same mutuality of interests which prevail while the struggle is on. This is at least dubious, and is probably a great delusion. The pattern of things to come is beyond our power of weaving. In past wars, you could assume a certain fixity and stability of nations and economics. But the whole world is now in a condition of such instability as between nations and inside every nation that the future is incalculable. For a country whose vital interests are not clearly involved (as Britain's and Germany's are) to enter the war for the sake of establishing a world order whose elements and factors are beyond human calculation is to stake its treasures and its destiny on a mere throw of the dice. To envisage the future in terms of the factors which motivate the desperate struggle of brute force is a naive oversimplification of the future. In the day of victory (to say nothing of the possibility of defeat) these factors will cease to operate and new factors not now imaginable will supersede them. In a world such as our world has come to be, the future is too utterly incalculable to justify any nation's participation in this war if that nation can remain apart. No man is competent to say that Russia will remain an ally of Great Britain and the United States in establishing a just and durable peace. Nor that the identity of interest between Great Britain and the United States will continue. It is at least arguable that victory, if and when it is grasped, will turn to ashes in our hands. There is a higher role for our country if the obsession of our leaders with the illusory consequences of a military triumph could be broken.

Oversimplifying The Future

Charles Clayton Morrison

New Books for PASTORS

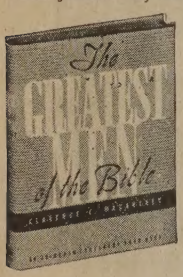


The Ethical Ideals of Jesus IN A CHANGING WORLD
G. Bromley Oxnam

Here is an acute analysis of the validity of the ideals of Jesus for just such a time as this. Bishop Oxnam considers current social, industrial, and international problems in the light of the religion of Jesus, answering the question *What is there in that religion to help the builders of tomorrow in the tremendous task of establishing world law and order, economic justice, and brotherhood?* The chapters are alive with spiritual insight. $1

A New Heaven and a New Earth
EDWIN LEWIS

This is more than an answer to those who have criticized the "neglect" of the "social gospel" by Dr. Lewis and others. It is a clear, challenging statement of that ultimate and fundamental ideal by which alone the social gospel may hope to live. The author discusses the Christian conception of Heaven as the criterion or pattern of a new and better earth. He considers with deep earnestness the new form of human brotherhood which Christianity seeks—what this is, what justifies it, what threatens it today, and what promises its eventual realization. $2



The Greatest Men of the Bible
CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY

The characters of this vivid series of biographical sermons are PAUL, DAVID, MOSES, JOHN, PETER, ABRAHAM, JOSEPH, ISAIAH, ELIJAH, SAMUEL, JOHN THE BAPTIST, JEREMIAH, DANIEL, JOSHUA, JOB.

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The Revolution in Christian Missions
ROY L. SMITH

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The Christian Has Wings
W. E. SANGSTER

This commentary on Democracy's war aims, as phrased by ten statesmen, is intended to show the underlying significance of such great words now in constant use as "A New Order"—PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT; "Security"—MR. CHURCHILL; "Spiritual Things"—FIELD-MARSHAL SMUTS; "Freedom"—MR. EDEN. Dr. Sangster, writing from the public air-raid shelter in which he has lived for months among the homeless war victims of bombed London, challenges his readers to *spiritual* preparedness. His book is a primer for *Christian thinking* and *preaching* in a world at war. $1.50

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